BLM LIBRARY
88051424

BLM Volunteer Handbook

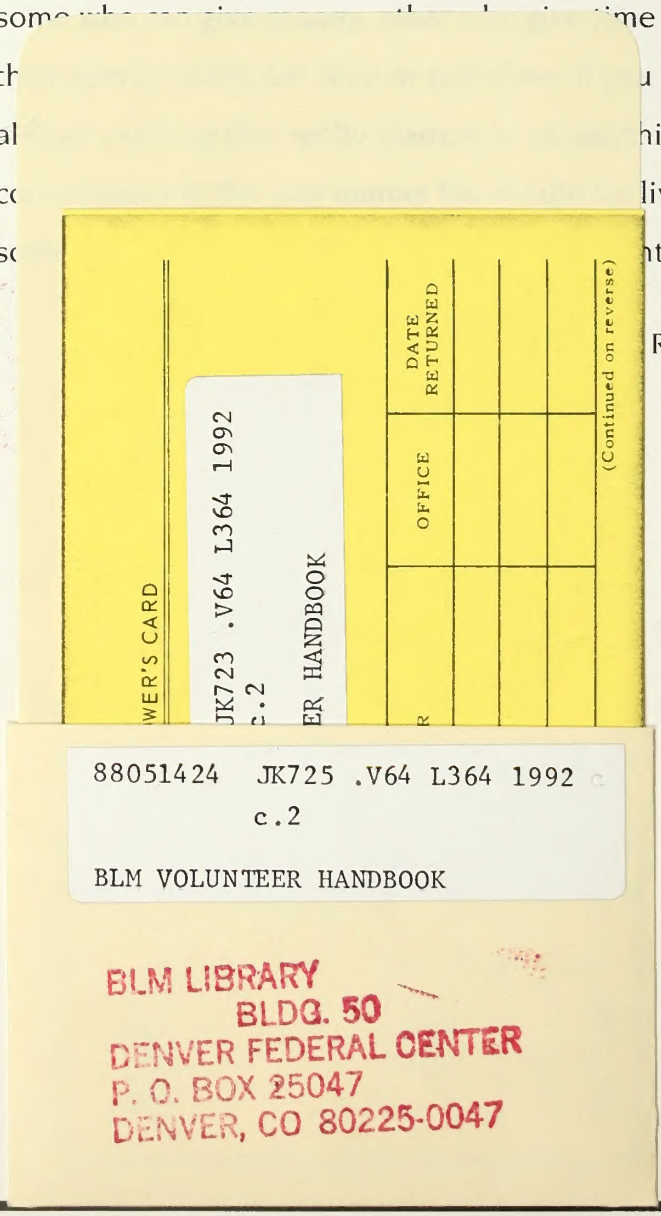
BLM LIBRARY
BLDG. 50
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
P. O. BOX 25047
DENVER, CO 80225-0047

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

JK
723
.V64
L364
1992
c.2

We live in a society that always has depended on volunteers of different kinds—
some who can give money, others who give time and a great many who will give
th u look closely, you will see that
al hing that embodies our deepest
c lived and cared for depends on
s nteerism.

Rhoda Metraud—"Aspects of the Present"



88051424

JK
723
.V64
L364
1992
c.2

BLM VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

Page

Welcome to the BLM 1

Orientation to the BLM 2

The BLM's Organizational Structure 3

Introduction to the Volunteer Program 4

BLM Volunteer Highlights 5

The Volunteer Agreement 7

Supervisor's Roles and Responsibilities 7

Volunteer Identification Card 8

Uniforms and Volunteer Identification Supplies 9

Volunteer Expenses and Reimbursement 9

Limitations on Volunteer Duties 10

Time and Attendance - Tour of Duty 10

Training 10

Radio/Telephone Use 10

Property Use 11

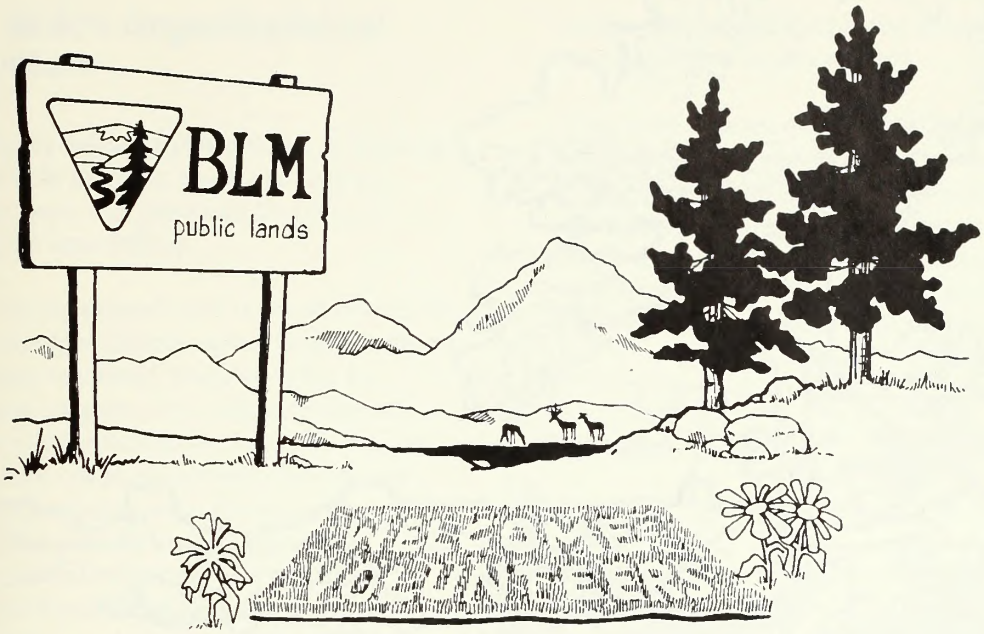
Use of Federal Government Vehicles 11

Safety 12

Injury and Tort Claims 12

Volunteer Evaluations 13

BLM LIBRARY
BLDG. 50
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
P.O. BOX 25047
DENVER, CO 80225-0047



Welcome to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

We're glad that you have chosen to donate your time and skills to the BLM. Exciting opportunities await you as a partner in the stewardship of America's Public Lands.

The thousands of hours that volunteers donate each year go a long way in helping us fulfill BLM's multiple use mission. Whether planting trees, erecting a fence, restoring an historic area or answering public inquiries, we're confident that you will benefit from the experience of caring for our Nation's resources. We also know that we will benefit from *your* unique background and skills.

The primary objective of this handbook is to give volunteers an understanding of their role and how it fits into the BLM's mission. We also want you to gain the most from your experience.

We trust that you will find your work stimulating and educational as you get to know more about the BLM's mission, its resources, employees, and the publics it serves. Please contact your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator if you have any questions or comments on any part of your work. Again, our sincere thanks for your help. Welcome aboard!

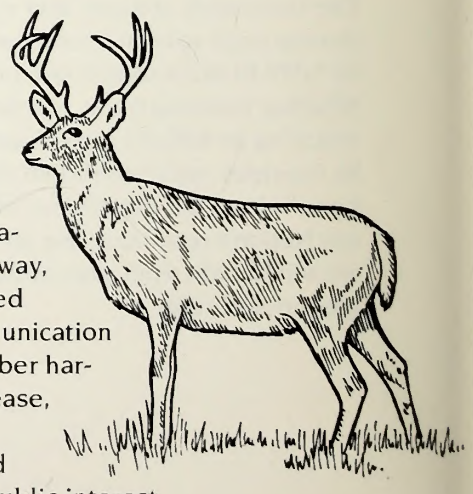
Orientation to the BLM

The BLM is responsible for the use, protection, and development of resources under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The BLM administers over 270 million acres of Public Lands, primarily in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming (See map on the following page.) In addition, the BLM also manages 570 million acres of Federally-owned minerals.

Most BLM-managed land consists of the remnants of public domain, the 1.5 billion acres the Nation acquired during its westward expansion in the 18th and 19th centuries. Much of the original public domain is now owned by private interests, or by local and State governments. The remainder of the land consists of national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges; military bases; and other Federal Government facilities.

The BLM is the custodian of the original patent and survey records for lands within 30 states and is the final authority on survey matters involving land within or once part of the public domain. The BLM also manages such resources as rangeland vegetation, forests, coal, oil and gas, geothermal energy, hardrock minerals, wildlife habitat, wilderness, cultural and visual resources, threatened and endangered plant and animal species, and wild horses and burros.

The BLM administers such uses as livestock grazing, outdoor recreation, energy and transportation rights-of-way, wind-generated energy, communication sites, and timber harvesting. We lease, transfer, and exchange land when in the public interest.



The BLM's Organizational Structure

The BLM's headquarters office is in Washington, D.C. In addition, there are 12 State offices, each with their own District and Resource Area Offices.

Most on-the-ground work is accomplished in Resource Area Offices, where staffing reflects the area's workload. Responsibility for resource programs lies with such specialists as wildlife biologists, foresters, mining engineers, range conservationists, archaeologists, and recreation planners. These specialists formulate and implement plans and recommendations for developing and protecting the area's resources.

District Offices provide administrative and operational support to resource area offices, and coordination and liaison with the State Offices.

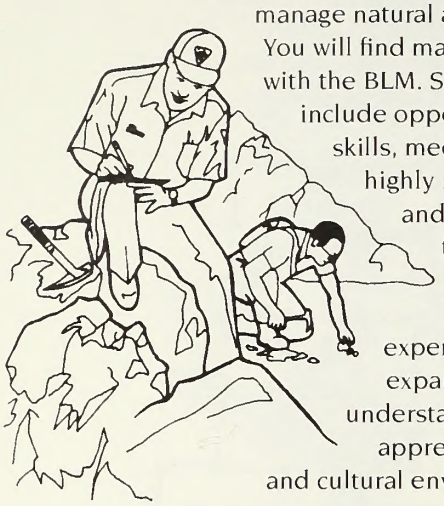
State Offices are responsible for BLM policy and budget matters, and provide communication between District Offices and the Washington Office.

The State Office resource specialists give technical guidance to field personnel. State offices and most District Offices also maintain "public rooms" for the public to examine records for all public land transactions, such as rights-of-way and state land grants, oil and gas leases, and mining claims. Also maintained in the public rooms are public land survey records.

If you wish to learn more about the BLM we recommend that you take time to view the video, "Our Public Lands—A National Treasure." This 18-minute video program introduces the BLM, summarizes its history, describes public land resources, and discusses our management responsibilities.

Introduction to the Volunteer Program

As a BLM volunteer, you are joining an elite cadre of more than 20,000 people who annually help the BLM perform its mission to manage natural and cultural resources. You will find many rewards working with the BLM. Some of the benefits include opportunities to learn new skills, meet interesting and highly motivated people, and challenge your ability to do jobs that need to be done. It is our hope that your experience with us will expand your awareness, understanding, sensitivity, and appreciation of the natural and cultural environment.



The volunteer program is an essential component of the BLM mission. The thousands of hours volunteers donate each year make it possible for the BLM to complete unfunded conservation work that would otherwise not be done.

You will have the opportunity to explore new areas, often in a beautiful and unique outdoor setting. Or you may find a challenge in an office setting working with modern automation systems. You will gain valuable experience that will help you qualify for future jobs in the Federal Government or in private industry. Assisting in the management of natural and cultural resources will give you an increased sense of responsibility for stewardship of the Public Lands.

There is a wide range of diverse experiences that await you as a BLM volunteer. Examples of projects that volunteers have worked on include: improving habitat for fish and wildlife; assisting recreational visitors to the Public Lands by serving as trail and river guides; building or maintaining trails and campgrounds; working on archaeological digs; improving range and forestland by planting trees and other vegetation; and conserving soil and water resources by improving watersheds.

Other projects include mapping, research and other tasks to support mineral and energy planning and development. Some volunteers assist with administrative support by operating computers and other office equipment.

Your job will be described in your Volunteer Agreement, which also spells out your responsibilities. You are considered a volunteer member of the BLM staff, and in some cases, will wear a BLM volunteer uniform or volunteer nameplate. You may also be recognized for your services through local recognition events and several national awards programs.

We will provide the tools and materials needed to perform your volunteer duties. You may have access to Government vehicles, office equipment, radios, and other necessary items.

Finally, you may be reimbursed for some of your expenses. Expenses for which you are not reimbursed may be tax deductible. (See the latest Internal Revenue Service Publication 526 for information on charitable contributions).

BLM Volunteer Highlights

To demonstrate our successful volunteer program, we've highlighted a few of our volunteers and the outstanding work they have accomplished.

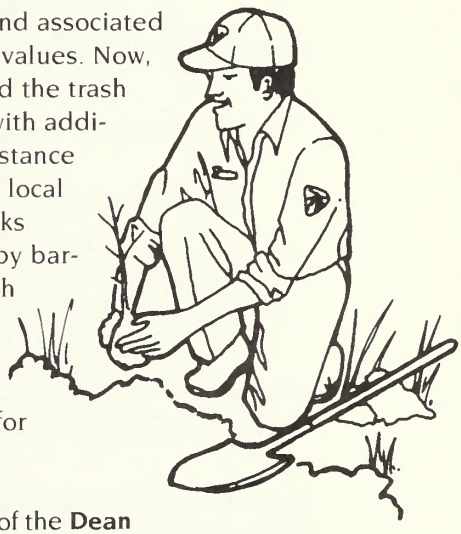
In Alaska, **Diana Gansemer** displayed initiative, enthusiasm, and grit in transforming an empty building north of the Arctic Circle into an hospitable visitor contact center. The center is located on the Dalton Highway, which is 600 miles of gravel road running north from Fairbanks to Prudhoe Bay. In its first summer season, this facility in the hamlet of Coldfoot attracted over 700 visitors asking questions about the BLM's Arctic District lands and nearby areas managed by the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Visitors enjoyed Ms. Gansemer's slide-show on northern Alaska history, recreation attractions, and fragile natural resources, as well as her walking tour of 80-year old gold miners' cabins. Ms. Gansemer's efforts resulted in the establishment of a permanent visitor center.

In Nevada, **Nicholas Williams** worked as a multi-purpose volunteer for the Tonopah Resource Area. He assisted the minerals program by mapping 24 mountain-top communication sites with a compass and chain survey. In addition, he helped maintain 13 remote water guzzlers that catch and store water for chukar partridge and desert bighorn sheep. His timely discovery and repair of a defective guzzler was credited with saving a herd of bighorns. Nicholas also assisted in clerical duties and ran the mobile radio station.

In Idaho, the volunteer services of 19 Native Americans and a University of Colorado anthropologist, Deward Walker, made it possible for the BLM to manage a historically valuable site known as Chief Tendoy Cemetery, located in the BLM Salmon District. In 1984, a 104-year old grandson of Chief Tendoy visited the site and found it damaged by vandalism and unauthorized off-road-vehicle use, hunter access, farming, cattle grazing and trash dumping.

Because of Dr. Walker's involvement, the BLM was able to recruit Native American volunteers of the Shoshone Bannock Tribes, who took Lemhi Shoshone elders from Fort Hall to the site and thus learned locations of graves and associated tribal traditions and values. Now, the site is fenced and the trash has been removed with additional volunteer assistance from Boy Scouts and local citizens. Vehicle tracks have been blocked by barriers and seeded with native vegetation, and historical and memorial markers are being prepared for the site.



In Oregon, members of the **Dean Creek Elk Committee** of the Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation contributed 18,500 hours of volunteer work toward completion of the BLM's 923-acre Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area near Reedsport, in the Coos Bay District.

They produced and presented videos and other educational materials which helped to educate citizens and local, State and Federal officials about the area's potential.

In addition, they raised $85,000 in public donations to help pay for construction of an interpretive center for visitors by sponsoring dinners and auctions, and selling "Join the Herd" T-shirts, caps and buttons. The interpretive center and the adjacent fenced viewing area allow visitors to observe herds of Roosevelt elk, bald eagles, osprey, and other species of coastal Oregon wildlife.

In Utah, 20 high school students wrestled with rock, wire mesh, steel posts, bailed straw, and filter fabric as they built 150 structures to reduce soil erosion in streams and gulleys.

The students were members of **South Sevier High School's Future Farmers of America Chapter,** and worked under the supervision of their vocational agriculture teacher, Larry Coombs. Mr. Coombs used the watershed improvement program of the BLM's Richfield District as a basis for instruction in environmental education and land management.

The BLM also recruits "hosted workers." Hosted workers perform work for the BLM, but are paid wages by some entity other than the BLM. One example is the Senior Community Service Employment Program, a Federal and State Program through which low-income elderly persons can work for public or community service organizations and be trained on the job while being paid the minimum wage.

The Volunteer Agreement

During your orientation, you and your supervisor will review your Volunteer Agreement (See Individual Volunteer Services Agreement, Form 1114-4, and Group Volunteer Services Agreement, Form 1114-5, included in your information packet). The Volunteer Agreement is your contract with the Federal Government, and it contains the following 4 elements:

1. A description of the work that you agree to accomplish. Your job will be summarized in a written job description spelling out your duties and responsibilities.
2. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the people that you wish to have contacted in case of an accident.
3. Assurance that you are protected from tort claims or injuries incurred while performing volunteer duties, the same coverage provided to paid employees.
4. Certification of the volunteer's health and physical capability to perform the volunteer job.

The Volunteer Agreement may also contain the following:

- Agreement on payment of expenses incidental to volunteer work.
- An explanation of how your work will be evaluated. If you will need a detailed written evaluation for future job applications, this need should be included in the Volunteer Agreement.
- Any requirements or criteria that you and your supervisor agree to.

You and your supervisor should periodically review the Volunteer Agreement to ensure that it is accurate and up to date.

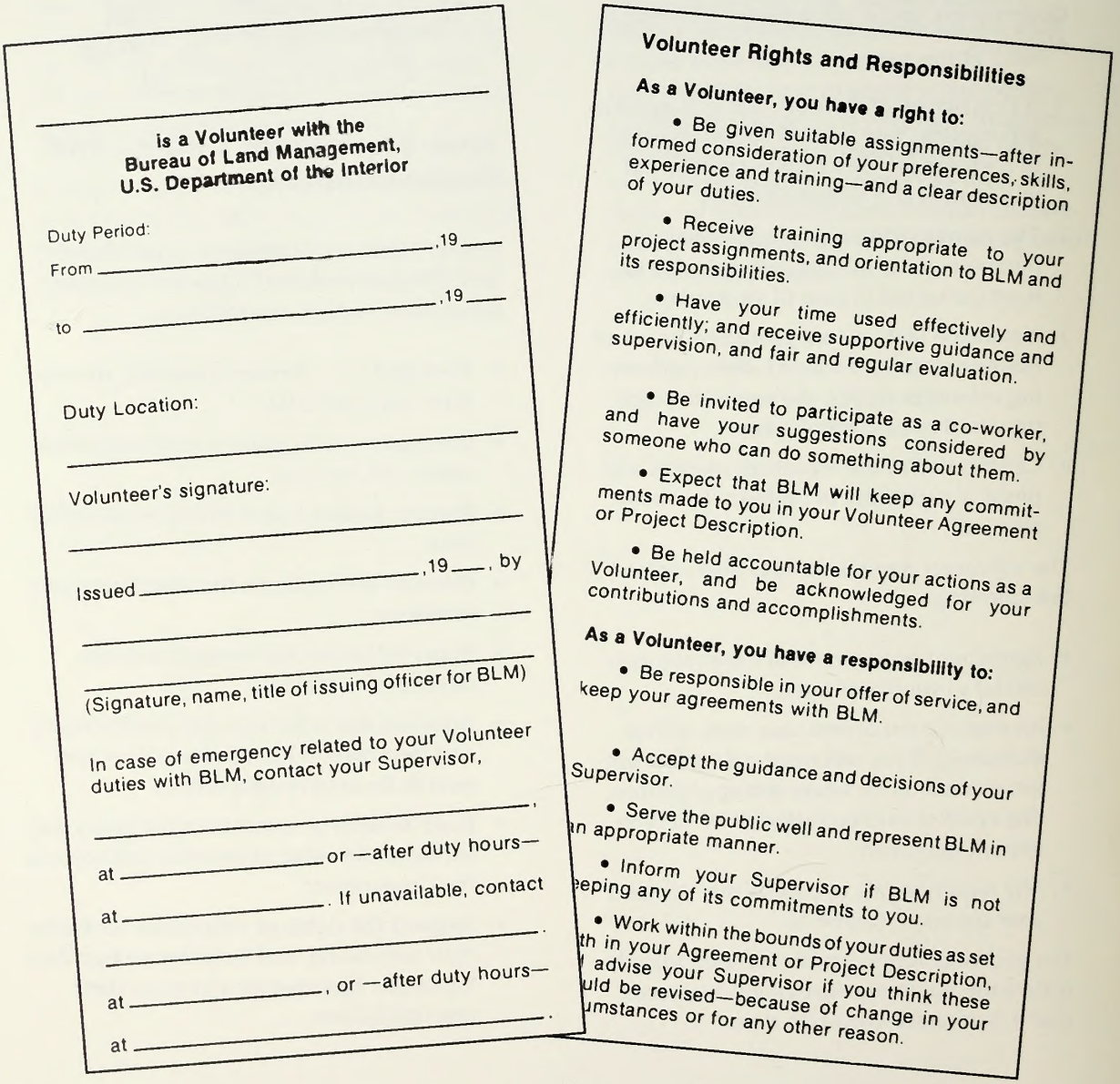
Your Supervisor's Roles and Responsibilities

Similar to those of employee supervisors, the roles and responsibilities of volunteer supervisors include the following:

- Participate in volunteer planning, recruitment, and selection.
- Conduct or participate in volunteer orientation and training.
- Provide guidance and advice to the volunteer.
- Oversee and evaluate the volunteer's performance.
- Keep Volunteer Agreements and job descriptions accurate.
- Acknowledge volunteer accomplishments and recommend formal recognition and awards for outstanding service.
- Keep records of volunteer work hours and estimate the value of benefits and costs to the Government.
- Respect the rights of volunteers, look after their well-being, and help them keep their Volunteer Agreements and meet their responsibilities.

Volunteer Identification Card

Volunteers who agree to serve for more than just a few days are issued a Form 1114-2, Volunteer Identification Card (ID). In addition to serving as identification, this ID Card includes the names and telephone numbers of BLM people you should call in an emergency with regard to your BLM duties. It also lists your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer.



_____

is a Volunteer with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

Duty Period:

From _____, 19___

to _____, 19___

Duty Location:

_____

Volunteer's signature:

_____

Issued _____, 19___, by

_____

_____

(Signature, name, title of issuing officer for BLM)

In case of emergency related to your Volunteer duties with BLM, contact your Supervisor,

_____,

at _____ or —after duty hours—

at _____. If unavailable, contact

_____.

at _____, or —after duty hours—

at _____.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a Volunteer, you have a right to:

- Be given suitable assignments—after informed consideration of your preferences, skills, experience and training—and a clear description of your duties.
- Receive training appropriate to your project assignments, and orientation to BLM and its responsibilities.
- Have your time used effectively and efficiently; and receive supportive guidance and supervision, and fair and regular evaluation.
- Be invited to participate as a co-worker, and have your suggestions considered by someone who can do something about them.
- Expect that BLM will keep any commitments made to you in your Volunteer Agreement or Project Description.
- Be held accountable for your actions as a Volunteer, and be acknowledged for your contributions and accomplishments.

As a Volunteer, you have a responsibility to:

- Be responsible in your offer of service, and keep your agreements with BLM.
- Accept the guidance and decisions of your Supervisor.
- Serve the public well and represent BLM in an appropriate manner.
- Inform your Supervisor if BLM is not keeping any of its commitments to you.
- Work within the bounds of your duties as set forth in your Agreement or Project Description, and advise your Supervisor if you think these should be revised—because of change in your circumstances or for any other reason.

Uniforms and Volunteer Identification Supplies

If your work involves public contact, you may be authorized to wear a uniform and receive a uniform allowance. The procedures for volunteers to obtain a uniform are the same as for employees. Your supervisor will explain these procedures to you.

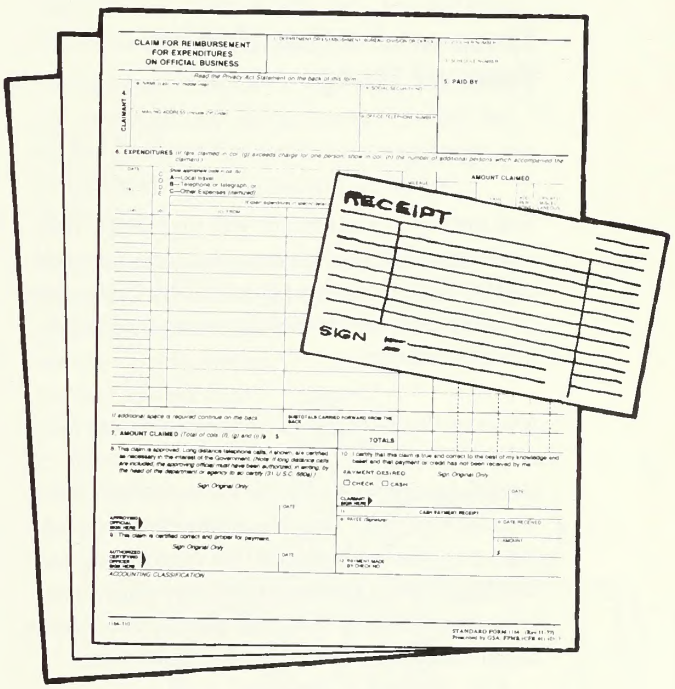
If your work involves reduced or temporary public visibility, you may be issued certain volunteer identification components. Your supervisor will determine what items you need and whether the items issued must be returned for future use. If uniform allowances have not been funded, you may purchase the uniform at your own expense and wear certain uniform components.

Volunteer uniform components include the following:

1. volunteer shoulder patch
2. generic or individualized volunteer nameplate
3. volunteer indoor/outdoor vest
4. volunteer cap

Volunteer Expenses and Reimbursements

You may be reimbursed for some of the money that you will have to spend as a volunteer under the same policies and procedures used for BLM employees. If these policies and procedures are unclear, discuss them with your supervisor before you spend any of your own money on volunteer job-related material, supplies, or services. The BLM office you are working with may be able to make purchases to do your work. However, do not purchase tools, materials, or supplies without prior authorization. Once you have authorization be sure to keep sales slips and receipts for reimbursement purposes. Your BLM supervisor will help you fill out the needed forms.



Limitations on Volunteer Duties

As a BLM volunteer you *cannot* perform the following duties:

- Work in law enforcement, carry firearms, or issue citations.
- Participate in hazardous activities, such as on-line firefighting, or perform any crew duties in low-flying aircraft.
- Operate heavy equipment unless you are properly trained and qualified and have your supervisor's approval.
- Participate in search and rescue work on behalf of BLM.
- Make BLM policy.
- Displace a salaried employee.

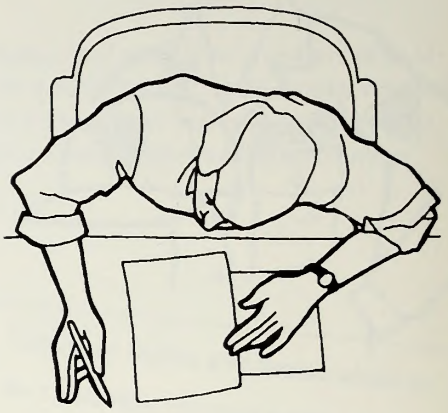
Time and Attendance—Tour of Duty

Work Schedule

You and your supervisor will negotiate your work schedule, which must be documented on the Volunteer Agreement form, Volunteer Group Agreement form, or on an attached job description.

If you or the BLM wish to change your work schedule, you must amend the Volunteer/Group Agreement to reflect the change. Your work can be very specific or flexible depending upon the work you will be performing according to your agreement. Notify your supervisor immediately if for any reason you cannot report to the job at the agreed upon time.

Note: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) or State government labor laws may limit the hours of service a juvenile volunteer can contribute during the school season.



Recordkeeping

Your supervisor or volunteer coordinator may ask you to keep one or more sets of records. Please make sure you understand why the information is needed and the amount of detail that is needed. You may be asked to keep a record of time that you spend doing volunteer work to enable the BLM to know the amount of time needed to complete a job.

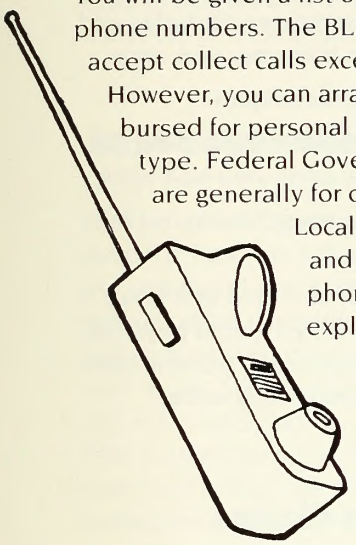
Training

Discuss with your supervisor the skills you have to do the job and the types of skills/knowledge you will need to acquire or improve. Training to help you gain new skills or improve existing ones may be possible.

Radio/Telephone Use

Communications are especially important for volunteers working in remote locations. Please be sure that you and your supervisor or project coordinator understand how and when these communications take place. In some cases, volunteers may be issued hand-held radios. Do not be afraid to use the radio, but be sure you know how to use it properly.

You will be given a list of important telephone numbers. The BLM usually will not accept collect calls except in emergencies. However, you can arrange to be reimbursed for personal expenses of this type. Federal Government telephones are generally for official business. Local telephone policies and appropriate telephone etiquette will be explained.



Property Use

As a volunteer, you will likely be issued tools, equipment, vehicles, or other Federal Government property to perform your work. When you use BLM property, you need to follow the same property regulations and procedures followed by employees. During your orientation, your supervisor will explain these procedures. You may be required to complete a DI-105, Receipt for Property form, for items assigned to you. If, through your negligence, you lose or damage equipment, you may be required to pay for the loss or damage.

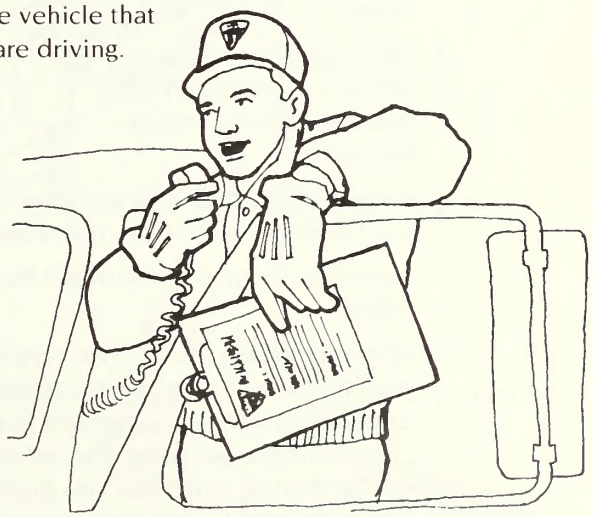
To drive a Federal Government vehicle, you must have a valid and current state driver's license and, in some circumstances, a Federal Government operator's identification card. Please be sure to report immediately to your supervisor any vehicle accidents, including even minor scratches and dents.

You may be permitted to use personal property during your volunteer service. If your supervisor allows you to use your own tools or other personal property as part of a volunteer project, this permission should be noted on your project or job description.

Use of Federal Government Vehicles

If you are authorized to use a Federal Government vehicle for your volunteer work, please read the vehicle operator's manual, usually found in the glove compartment. The following are a few important points to remember:

1. Always use your seatbelt. Aside from the obvious safety reasons, you may not be covered by the Federal Government if you are injured in an accident and found not to be wearing your seatbelt.
2. Set the parking brake when leaving the vehicle.
3. Do not leave the Federal Government credit card for the purchase of gasoline in the vehicle. Carry it with you, even if leaving the vehicle for repairs or servicing.
4. Do not use Federal Government vehicles for personal use. All passengers must be either Federal Government employees or volunteers under a current Volunteer Agreement.
5. Buy the proper gasoline from self-service pumps. Pay for the gasoline with the Federal Government gasoline credit card assigned to the vehicle that you are driving.



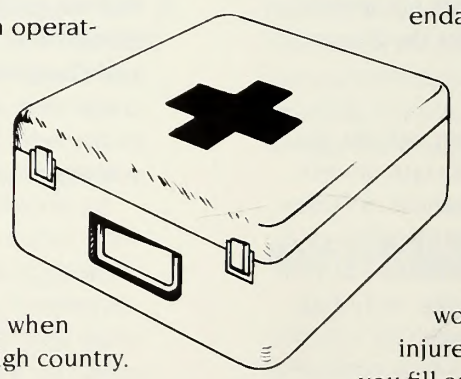
Check the list of approved stations before refueling. Also before refueling, check with the gas station to see if it accepts Federal Government credit cards.

6. Do not use Federal Government credit cards for parking, storage, or minor repairs exceeding $50 or to purchase tires, tubes, or batteries. Consult the *Vehicle Operator's Manual.*
7. Become familiar with limitations as to what can be purchased with Federal Government credit cards. See the *Vehicle Operator's Manual.*
8. In case of an accident, see Chapter II of the *Vehicle Operator's Manual.*
9. Obey speed limits and all traffic laws and drive carefully and defensively.

Safety

Safety is no accident. A job done right is a job done safely.

- Your well-being is of high concern to the BLM. Take the time to gather the proper tools and use them carefully.
- Always wear a seatbelt when operating a BLM vehicle.
- Drive defensively at all times.
- When you are hiking in remote country, watch your step and carry a personal first-aid kit.
- Carry enough water with you when you travel in the desert or high country.
- Learn how to operate the BLM's two-way radios.
- When going into the field be sure that you sign out with the radio dispatcher, receptionist or the appropriate person. List where you are going, the vehicle you will be driving, and when you expect to return. Be sure to sign in when you return.



- When working in an office, know where first aid kits are kept, and remove obstacles and other safety hazards from your work area.
- Learn proper lifting techniques.
- Become familiar with BLM safety plans that list hazards that may affect your well being.
- Be aware of BLM volunteer hazard restrictions.
- As required, provide the BLM with accurate information concerning your physical condition and your ability to perform specific types of work, especially under adverse conditions.

Injury and Tort Claims

As a volunteer, you can receive first aid and medical care for on-the-job injuries. You have the same coverage as salaried employees under the Workers' Compensation Program, with one exception: you cannot receive continuation of pay for up to 45 days after an on-the-job injury since you are not salaried.

Disguising or keeping a medical problem secret may compromise your health or endanger your life or others. If you are allergic to bees or other insects, tell your supervisor. Immediately report any accidents, regardless of how small to your supervisor. Common hazards include scratches, small cuts, and puncture wounds from sticks. If you are injured, your supervisor will help you fill out the proper forms to protect you in case complications develop later from the injury.

Also, you are protected from liability claims. From time to time, property losses or damages, personal injury, or deaths are claimed to have resulted from negligent or wrongful acts or omissions of BLM employees in the course of their duties. The BLM volunteers

receive the same coverage as employees in the event of such a tort claim.

BLM Volunteer Evaluations

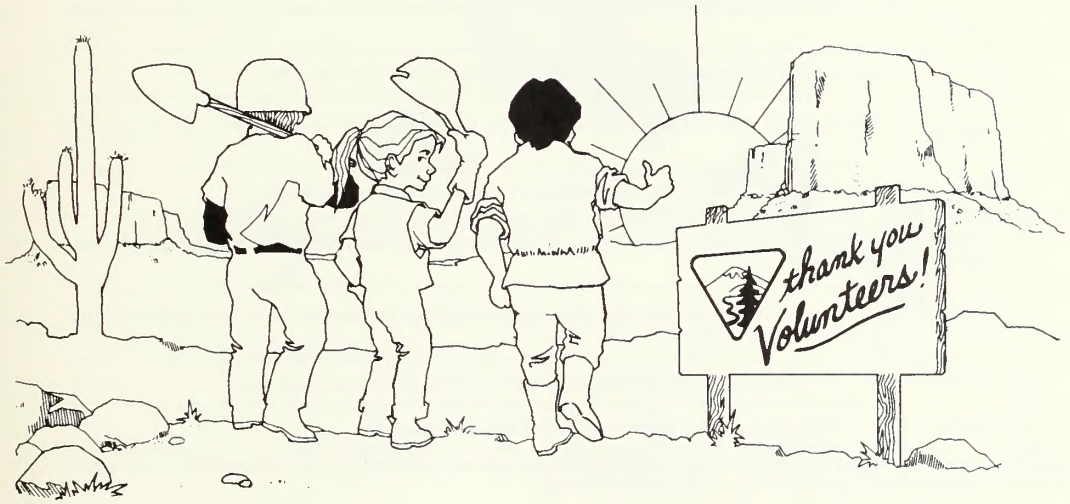
Your Volunteer Agreement usually will describe how you will be evaluated. A sample standard form is attached for your information. More complex volunteer jobs may have a formal written evaluation. If you want an in-depth evaluation to go with a future job application, discuss this with your supervisor or volunteer project coordinator and make sure that the evaluation procedures are included in the Volunteer Agreement.

Evaluations are a two-way street. On completing your assignment, you are invited to evaluate your BLM experience.

In Closing...

This handbook should cover everything you'll need to know for your volunteer experience. And, of course, don't hesitate to ask questions!

Being a BLM volunteer may not make you rich, but it will be one of the most richly rewarding experiences you will ever have. We are proud of our volunteers and their achievements, and know that you, too will take pride in your Public Lands.



BLM LIBRARY
DEN BLDG. 50
P. O ERAL CENTER
DENV 80225-0047

Form 1114-1
(June 1986)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Agreement No.

Volunteer's Name *(Print or type)*	Type of Project	Principal Task(s)

Office Location	SERVICE PERIOD COVERED *(Dates)*	
	FROM	TO

NOTE: Evaluate each of the following factors and rate each based on this scale: 1—Outstanding; 2—Excellent; 3—Satisfactory; 4—Marginal; 5—Unsatisfactory; 6—No Opportunity to Evaluate.

RATING	EVALUATION FACTORS *(Suggested standard for rating)*
	A. *Judgment*—Uses good judgment in interpreting and following policies and procedures; recognizes when there is a need for departure from usual procedures.
	B. *Working With Others*—Has good liaison with colleagues; assists others whenever appropriate; gives competent and complete assistance; gains the confidence of others; pleasant and courteous.
	C. *Oral Communication*—Talks on the level of people he/she deals with; responds to requests for help; gets his/her point across; asks questions when necessary to understand instructions.
	D. *Written Communication*—Gets the necessary information before writing; writes effectively; reader can follow his/her thoughts clearly.
	E. *Initiative*—Acts timely on all assigned tasks; willingly does assignments to the best of his/her ability.
	F. *Adaptability*—Readily accepts new or different tasks and adapts to new situations; knows when to seek assistance or support.
	G. *Planning and Organizing*—Work is neat, well arranged and easy to follow; plans use of time well.
	H. *Creativity*—Sees relationships among factors and comes up with good and workable ideas; cuts through procedural obstacles; and develops workable end products.
	I. *Decisionmaking*—Not afraid to make decisions and learn from failures; decisions are based on facts or sound judgment; accepts responsibility for decisions he/she makes.
	J. *Amount of Work*—All assigned tasks completed by the date agreed to by the Volunteer and Supervisor.
	K. *Quality of Work*—Meets quality standards agreed to by the Volunteer and Supervisor.

Use this space for comments, including the evaluation of any other relevant factors, and any recommendations for improvement *(if more space is needed use reverse, attach additional sheets, if necessary). (Continued on reverse.)*

SAMPLE

☆U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1992-0-676-643

Use this space for comments, including the evaluation of any other relevant factors, and any recommendations for improvement *(if more space is needed, attach additional sheets).*

List Volunteer's duties *(the Volunteer's project description may be attached in lieu of a separate list of duties, additional sheets may be attached, if necessary).*

SAMPLE

This evaluation has been discussed with the Volunteer.

Volunteer's Signature)	(Date)
(Supervisor's Signature)	(Date)
Name *(print or type)*	(Title)

BLM LIBRARY
BLDG. 50
DEN RAL CENTER
F 47
80225-0047